

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Anne Marie Moss, (503) 399-1701, ext. 313, annemarie@oregonfb.org

Farm Bureau promotes agriculture education in Tillamook schools

Despite the fact that kids living in Tillamook County are familiar with the sight of black-and-white dairy cows grazing in pastures and red barns dotting the region's countryside — there is still a surprising lack of understanding by children about where their food comes from and why agriculture is important.

"A lot of kids know that mom goes to the store and buys the food that they eat for breakfast, but they don't comprehend where that food began," said Carol Marie Leuthold, a dairy farmer and president of the Tillamook County Farm Bureau.

To help local elementary school students make the connection between food and farming and learn the value of agriculture, Leuthold and fellow Tillamook County Farm Bureau member Orella Chadwick donated cases of "Get Oregonized" textbooks to Nehalem and Cloverdale Elementary Schools earlier this month.

"Get Oregonized" is a 4th grade-level textbook and teacher's guide that incorporates the roles of agriculture and natural resources in the shaping of Oregon's history, economy, culture, and landscape. The book was first written by teachers more than 20 years ago, and was updated in 2005 and again in 2007 by the Oregon Agriculture in the Classroom program.

"It's so important that the students understand where their food and fiber comes from," said Orella Chadwick, a retired teacher and dairy farmer, and membership secretary for the Tillamook County Farm Bureau. "Not all kids or even adults realize the extent that agriculture impacts their daily lives."

Three cases of 10 "Get Oregonized" textbooks were donated to both schools.

Upon receiving the books, Cloverdale Elementary School Principal Nick Gelbard said, "We live in an area that's dependent upon dairy farming and hopefully again on logging, natural resources, and fishing. Students need to learn about these industries, and how they can be responsible citizens in agriculture and natural resources. The books will be a nice supplement to the materials we have for 4th graders as they learn about Oregon's history."

Donating textbooks is only one way that Tillamook County Farm Bureau promotes agriculture education. Every year, the organization puts on Farm Fest, a day-long event geared toward children. It offers demonstrations and hands-on activities that teach students about farming and ranching.

Tillamook County Farm Bureau also offers a scholarship program to students planning to pursue an agriculture-related career at a college or university. This year Oregon State University attendee Kristin Hogan of Tillamook won the \$750 scholarship.

And every year the Farm Bureau has a booth at the Tillamook County Fair. There, volunteer leaders sell raffle tickets for prizes like a 40-pound block of aged cheddar cheese or a fishing trip for two. After part of the proceeds is donated back to the county fair, the rest is used for ag education, 4-H, and FFA projects.

“We need to explain to kids that simply by consuming food they are involved in agriculture,” said Leuthold. “As Farm Bureau representatives, we want to let the schools know that we are here and are willing to help with materials and activities to educate students about agriculture, why it’s important, and how it impacts their daily lives.”

For more information about the “Get Oregonized” textbook, visit the Oregon Agriculture in the Classroom website at <http://aitc.oregonstate.edu>.

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PHOTO CAPTION

Tillamook County Farm Bureau President Carol Marie Leuthold (left) and Membership Secretary Orella Chadwick (right) present Nick Gelbard (middle), principal of Cloverdale Elementary School, with a donation of “Get Oregonized” textbooks. The books incorporate the roles of agriculture and natural resources in the shaping of Oregon’s history.

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* Note to Editors: “Farm Bureau” is a registered trademark; please capitalize in all cases.

In 2007, Oregon Farm Bureau celebrated its 75th Anniversary as the state’s largest general agriculture organization. Farm Bureau has more than 8,000 member families professionally engaged in agriculture in all 36 Oregon counties.

Oregon Farm Bureau, 3415 Commercial St. SE, Salem, Oregon 97302, (503) 399-1701
www.oregonfb.org